WORLD / A25

Massive bomb attack foiled in Turkey

NEWS / A2

Enrile, Angara oppose Senate probe of NBN deals

WORLD / A24

Japanese PM Abe quits, a victim of scandals that stalled his reform agenda

SPORTS / A30

UE guns for historic sweep

AT A GLANCE

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, September 13, 2007 · Vol. 22 / No. 277

Court bases decision on two illegal acts

By Volt Contreras

GUILTY OF PLUNDER



Court noted it's first plunder case vs highest official of the land

By Volt Contreras

"I TOOK A GAMBLE," JOSEPH Estrada said—and the nation watched as the gambler lost.

Hush blankets holding room for Estrada family

Erap: We'll fight, will file motion for reconsideration

It's enough to make a grown man cry

ANALYSIS



Show of force: An overkill

Verdict serves as a warning to GMA, too

COMMENTARY



It's all over, Estrada lawyer tells daughter

GMA: Verdict to end destabilization talk

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Probe of NBN deals opposed

Enrile, Angara claim there's no binding contracts yet

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Migrante raps POEA ruling on 'Sentosa 27'

By Jerome Aning

US dismissal

Highly dubious

Signature campaign

Picket at Manila Zoo set

Dawn Admits: My Husband Has A New *Lover*



Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 6 ISSUE, Juan L. Mercado's "Viewpoint" column on Page A14 of the Opinion section [illegible] misstated [illegible] killed by their former commander. De Vera died on Sept. 7 of a heart attack.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 12 ISSUE, a front page article—"SC turns 8-5 to stop NBN deal"—misnamed the province represented by Rep. Carlos Padilla. Padilla represents Nueva Vizcaya—not Nueva Ecija.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, the photo caption on Page A18 misspelled the surname of one of the justices of the Sandiganbayan Special Division. The justice's name is Diosdado Peralta—not Paralta.

* * *

[illegible]



Fine vs DepEd exec upheld

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS AFFIRMED the penalty imposed by the Office of the Ombudsman on a top official of the Department of Education for his involvement in the purchase of P21.5 million worth of vehicles without public bidding.

The high tribunal, in a decision dated Sept. 7, dismissed the petition of former DepEd Undersecretary for External Affairs Victor [illegible] who sought to overturn the finding of the Office of the Ombudsman that he was guilty of "conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service" and "simple misconduct." He was fined the equivalent of six months of his salary.

The ruling stemmed from an administrative case filed by the Ombudsman in [illegible] against nine DepEd officials, including then Secretary Andrew Gonzalez, for a "conspiracy by silence" regarding the illegal disbursement of donated funds. The specific charges included failing to follow guidelines in connection with the receipt and use of donations; allowing donations to be used for purposes other than that for which the amount was granted; and failing to comply with the procurement guidelines for the purchase of government vehicles.

The case concerned the purchase by DepEd of P21.5 million worth of vehicles with money from a special account in the Land Bank of the Philippines. The apparently secret account contained P22 million donated by the bank to the DepEd as well as interest earned from the department's other accounts.

[illegible] was found liable for not taking steps to report the existence of the special account to the budget department, Commission on Audit, or the DepEd's accounting department. He was also identified as an active participant in purchasing the vehicles without public bidding and without authority from the Office of the President.

[illegible] had questioned the findings before the Court of Appeals. He argued that he did not violate accounting and auditing rules because as Undersecretary for External Affairs, he had no legal obligation to report the existence of the special account, which he said he did not know about.

But the appellate court ruled against him, and this was sustained by the high court.



GOODWILL VISIT
Two US Navy ships from the US 7th Fleet are in Manila to conduct community projects and participate in friendship-building activities in the country. The ships will turn over various items donated by Americans, including toys, books and medical supplies to the Department of Social Welfare and Development for distribution to those less fortunate. USS Chung-Hoon, based at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, is shown docked at the Manila South Harbor. Partly shown is the San Diego-based USS Milius. Another ship, the USS Chosin, is due to arrive in Cebu today. [illegible]



Lawyers set petition vs terror body

ABOUT 130 HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS are set to petition the courts for urgent remedies to protect the rights of people who may be placed under surveillance by the newly formed Anti-Terror Council (ATC), which they described as a virtual "military-civilian junta."

The newly formed National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL) yesterday warned that the ATC had been given such sweeping powers that it was capable of violating the rights and civil liberties of the people "on a daily basis, and in gigantic proportions."

The ATC, created by the Human Security Act of 2007 and chaired by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, has the power to maintain dossiers on anybody in the country, freeze bank accounts and force cooperation from media under the guise of coordinating national efforts to eradicate terrorism, the lawyers' group said.

"That the ATC is a civilian-military junta in itself is evidenced by Sec. 53 (of the the Human Security Act or Republic Act 9372) that gives ATC sweeping powers to establish and maintain comprehensive database information on terrorism, terrorist activities and counterterrorism," said NUPL member Neri Javier Colmenares.

Colmenares said the NUPL wants to use a legal remedy known as the writ of habeas data to temper ATC's "sweeping powers" by allowing those in the ATC database the recourse to correct and even destroy patently inaccurate data and analysis gathered through surveillance. *Dennis Hiring*

The Daily Gospel

Thursday, September 13, 2007
23rd Week in Ordinary Time
John Chrysostom

1st Reading: Col 3:12-17
Gospel: Luke 6:27-38

Jesus said to his disciples, "But I say to you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you and pray for those who treat you badly. To the one who strikes you on the cheek, turn the other cheek; from the one who takes your coat, do not keep back your shirt. Give to the one who asks and if anyone has taken something from you, do not demand it back.

"Do to others as you would have others do to you. If you love only those who love you, what kind of graciousness is yours? Even sinners love those who love them. If you do favors to those who are good to you, what kind of graciousness is yours? Even sinners do the same. If you lend only when you expect to receive, what kind of graciousness is yours? For sinners also lend to sinners, expecting to receive something in return.

"But love your enemies and do good to them, and lend when there is nothing to expect in return. Then will your reward be great and you will be sons and daughters of the Most High. For he is kind towards the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

"Don't be a judge of others and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you, and you will receive in your sack good measure, pressed down, full and running over. For the measure you give will be the measure you receive back."

Commentary

We are God's holy and chosen ones, God's beloved. We then are to clothe ourselves in the garments of our baptism into Jesus and the Spirit. We are to live and act, speak and pray like Jesus. This is a blueprint for building up the life of a believer. These are the basics to be practiced by everyone. We make present the reality of our lives with each other, in the Body of Christ and in the world.

Jesus' words are like a sword to our hearts and souls: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless and pray for those who harm you. We are to live with the peace of God, without hurts, violence or provocation of others. We are to respond with life-giving imagination, reaching, and a choice to communicate in every situation. We are to lend and give generously even if we think that nothing may come back to us. We are to be holy, compassionate, and forgiving, living like God in relation to everyone. What kind of measure will we be giving back today, Megan?

Claretian Publications, Inc. [illegible]



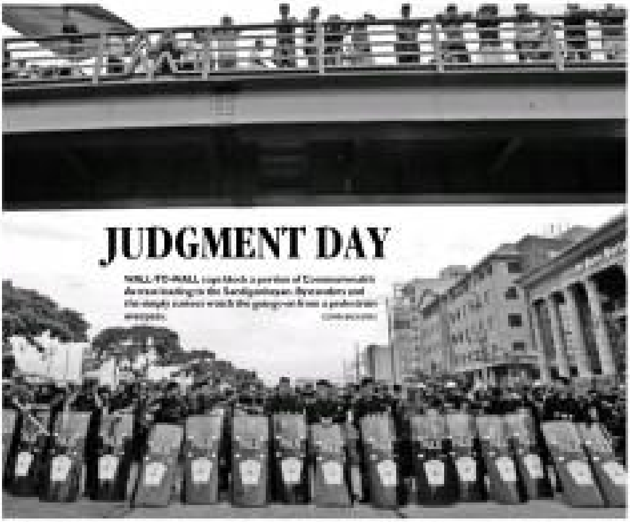


Erap: We'll fight, will file motion for reconsideration

Doubt at the start

'Ugly reality'







Show of force: 'Better overreacted than caught unprepared'

Remains in full alert

Threat analysis

Peaceful rallies

Deployments

1-stop-shop for housing developers to be set up

By Cynthia D. Balana

Secure permits

Bill seeking to clear poll winners filed

By Norman Bordadora

It's enough to make a grown man cry

From page A1

which involves many states and is material scale. The acts and/or omissions sought to be penalized do not involve simple cases of malversation of public funds, bribery, extortion, theft and graft but constitute plunder of an entire nation resulting in material damage to the national economy."

Congress translated this concept into the Plunder Law under which the Sandiganbayan found Estrada guilty. The verdict of the antigraft court is not yet final. Estrada may still file a motion for reconsideration with the Sandiganbayan or bring an appeal directly to the Supreme Court.

Even if I were to carefully read the more than two hundred pages of the decision, I would still not be in a position to agree or disagree with the verdict. It will take some time even for the defense lawyers to prepare their rebuttal of the conviction.

Complicated case

It is a complicated case, and I doubt that an appellate tribunal will be able to come out with an instantaneous review. Meanwhile, the Sandiganbayan has decided that Estrada, while awaiting finality of the verdict, may continue to stay in his rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

For the purpose of this piece, I shall limit myself to an explanation of the penalty which the Sandiganbayan saw fit to impose. Let me just quote the dispositive portion of the decision as read by the Sandiganbayan Clerk of Court and try to point out some of its implications.

No matter how you look at it, the sentence is enough to make a grown man cry.

It says: "Accordingly, accused former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada is hereby sentenced to suffer the penalty of reclusion perpetua and the accessory penalties of civil interdiction during the period of sentence and perpetual absolute disqualification.

"The period within which accused former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada has been under detention shall be credited to him in full as long as he agrees voluntarily in writing to abide by the same disciplinary rules imposed upon convicted prisoners.

"Moreover, in accordance with Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7080, as amended by Republic Act No. 7659, the Court hereby declares the forfeiture in favor of the government of the following:

1. The total amount of Five Hundred Forty Two Million Seven Hundred Ninety One Thousand Pesos (P545,291,000.00), with interest and income earned, inclusive of the amount of Two Hundred Million Pesos (P200,000,000.00), deposited in the name and account of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation.

2. The amount of One Hundred Eighty Nine Million Pesos (P189,000,000.00), inclusive of interests and income earned, deposited in the Jose Velarde account.

3. The real property consisting of a house and lot dubbed as the "Boracay Mansion" located at No. 100 11th Street, New Manila, Quezon City."

[illegible] are easily understood.

Made less than a person

But what does reclusion perpetua mean?

It means imprisonment for at least thirty years, unless a person "by reason of his conduct or some other serious cause shall be considered by the Chief Executive as worthy of pardon."

Moreover, in the case of Estrada, his years of confinement since his arrest in 2001 would be deducted from the thirty years.

Over and above imprisonment, reclusion perpetua also carries with it the accessory penalties of "civil interdiction" and "perpetual absolute disqualification."

During the period of sentence, a person under civil interdiction is deprived "of the rights of parental authority, or guardianship, either as to the person or property of any ward, of marital authority, of the right to manage his property and of the right to dispose of such property by any act or any conveyance inter vivos."

In effect, he is made less than a person.

Perpetual absolute disqualification for public office means deprivation of the public offices and employment which the offender may have held even if conferred by popular election, deprivation of the right to vote in any election for any popular office or to be elected to such office, loss of all rights to retirement pay or other pension for any office formerly held.

Pardon

Reclusion perpetua and the accessory penalties that go with it may, of course, all be erased by an absolute pardon.

But pardon may come only after final conviction.

Incidentally, Estrada has already said that he will not accept pardon. It is worth noting, however, that only conditional pardon requires acceptance.

An absolute pardon becomes effective even if not accepted.

The nation waited for more than six years for the Sandiganbayan to pronounce its verdict. It will have to wait a little longer for the Supreme Court's final verdict.

And, of course, today's decision may be reversed by the Supreme Court.



Verdict serves as warning to GMA; she has much to worry about

From page A1

sertion mentioning between 300 and 400 during the last six years of her administration, emerging corruption scandals over government transactions, and the long-running Senate investigation on the tainted "Hello Garci" tapes.

Ms Arroyo has not made a clean breast of her administration's responsibility for the unsolved death squad executions, for which South American dictators, such as Gen. Augusto Pinochet of Chile, were put on trial.

Estrada evaded removal from office by impeachment because the Senate trial was aborted by the suppression of evidence.

That evidence involved corruption charges that went on to develop into the plunder case filed after he was toppled by people power. The closure of the impeachment trial took on a new life in the [illegible] corruption case now brought to a conclusion by the Sandiganbayan.

Ms Arroyo has much to worry about and is anxious for after 2010.

Air of crisis

Estrada arrived at the Sandiganbayan around 9 a.m. without the fawning entourage that flocked around him in his days of power, and without the howling mobs from the under classes of Metro Manila's teeming shantytowns lapping steps to the court.

Only the [illegible] police, some 5,000 of them put on high alert at the court premises and around Wednesday to quell any disturbance from Estrada's urban poor constituency, were the visible manifestation of an air of crisis for an unpopular administration insecure about its public support. The well-armed troops, ringed by armored vehicles, outnumbered the thin ranks of protesters.

Estrada was calm when [illegible], clerk of court of the Sandiganbayan Special Division, read the lengthy decision.

When the clerk of court pronounced the word "guilty" after reading the dispositive portion of Criminal Case No. 26558, Estrada uttered ... the only reaction he betrayed after hearing the verdict that sentenced him to life imprisonment.

"I've always expected that this will happen," Estrada said in a statement. "This court was created to convict me."

Not the first

Estrada was not the first official to be convicted of the crime of plunder that was established in 1991. The distinction belongs to [illegible] Manalili, a Bureau of Internal Revenue auditor, who was sentenced to two life terms after she was found guilty of diverting more than P300 million in withholding tax payments into two bank accounts from 1996 to 1997.

This penalty is nothing compared to the ruling on the Estrada case in which, apart from the life term sentence, the court ordered the forfeiture of P545,291,000 worth of ill-gotten assets of the ousted leader, P189 million in deposits in the Jose Velarde bank account and his fabulous "Boracay Mansion" in New Manila, Quezon City.

The decision underlined the landmark significance of the verdict when it said, the Estrada plunder case "is the first of its kind to be filed charging the highest official of the land ... of the offense of plunder."

It also pointed out that the case "set historical and legal precedents" on a number of unsettled issues that were put to the court during the trial, including the constitutionality of the plunder law and the propriety of the house arrest of Estrada while standing trial.

Sandiganbayan message

After that trial run of the plunder law, the draconian arms of the law have caught up with the high and mighty in the Estrada plunder conviction.

The Sandiganbayan verdict seems to send the message that the law is not a dead letter but is a serious exercise in enforcing the notion that public officials, not excluding the highest official of the land, could be held accountable for official acts involving enrichment in office in breach of the rule that a public office is a public trust.

The verdict on Estrada delivered the warning that the courts of justice are mandated to enforce this accountability and presidents after Estrada are forewarned that they cannot expect immunity from prosecution for corrupt practices involving the wholesale looting of the nation's wealth through abuse of power.

The decision involved the issue of the consequences of a verdict for political instability in the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo if Estrada had been acquitted.

Prior to the promulgation of the verdict, issues had been raised that with Estrada a free man, his return to politics would make him a rallying point for the opposition to make things difficult for Ms Arroyo.

It has also argued that acquittal would have revived the legitimacy issue over Ms Arroyo's takeover in 2001 through people power and would have encouraged Estrada supporters to press for his reinstatement to serve out his term cut short by Edsa II. These issues have now become moot.

Less threatening

The question of unrest over a guilty verdict has become less threatening, as reaction from the streets has not been as turbulent as anticipated by the security forces.

For now, Estrada has been sidelined, but the precedent of the plunder decision could catch up with Ms Arroyo. The law has a long arm.



PDI CIRCULATION GROUP, together with UNILAB Pharmaceuticals conducted its 10th leg of medical mission for the valued partners, the newspaper vendors or newsboys, in Metro Manila. Last Saturday's (September 8, 2007) medical mission was held in Quezon Ave., Quezon City. More than 300 newsboys and their families from the Quezon City area benefited in this mission.

Chavit feels vindicated, MJ forgiving, Atong sad

By PDI staff

Stern warning

Forgiveness

Disappeared



It's all over …

GUILTY OF PLUNDER ON 2 COUNTS



FLASH OF ANGER: [illegible]

IN THE KNOW

[illegible]

'Not once but twice'

[illegible]

Gasps in courtroom

[illegible]

'He's ready'

[illegible]

Silent weeping

[illegible]

Open and shut

[illegible]

Hush blankets holding room for Estrada family



DEJECTED: [illegible]

Dead air

[illegible]

Police chopper

[illegible]

'They'll have their day'

[illegible]

'More powerful than GMA'

[illegible]

Miriam's advice

[illegible]

Erap donation to slain soldiers' kin hit

By Nikko Dizon

Pamalakaya puts DA usec under fire over Jpepa deal

Estrada's fate lies in GMA hands



PlunderWatch tells GMA: You're next

By [illegible]

AN ANTIGRAFT GROUP THAT HELPED oust Joseph Estrada from the presidency in 2001 and build the plunder case against him is now training its sights on his successor, President Macapagal-Arroyo.

[illegible]



"VICTORY FOR JUSTICE" [illegible]

[illegible]

Selective justice

[illegible]

Focus now on GMA

[illegible]

INQUIRER

OPINION

He was Velarde

EDITORIAL

AND SO IT HAS COME TO PASS. THE FIRST EX-president to face a criminal trial has become the first ex-president to be convicted of a crime.

[illegible]



The mendicant option

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

[illegible]

Privileges

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

[illegible]

On pardon and amnesty



POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

Sing, 'Fiat justitia ruat coelum'



HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

Estrada's ghost army



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

Home again

YOUNG BLOOD

JR Eusebio

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS

THEY SAID

Slap on the wrist

P1B daily war budget an insult

LETTERS

Disturbing photo

Cebu's special gift to civilization

Beyond boom-and-bust: It's an economic boomerang

Consumers not represented in WESM board

Bishop wrong; Marines' lives were not wasted

Across the NATION

DOJ accused of meddling in Batangas co-op scam

Panel formed to probe rampant smuggling of cars in Cebu port





DISTRACTION

Board backs 3 bills on new tax breathers

2 suspects in poll exec's murder nabbed

20,000 settlers face eviction in 2 Cavite towns

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

'Facilitating' Mangyan learning

By Nina Catherine Calleja
Los Baños, Laguna

HAVING COME FROM A POOR village in Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro, Antonio Oroza, a Mangyan-Hanunuo, knew that education among the Mangyan youth was sorely lacking.



ANTONIO "Dodong" Oroza, 38, pursued higher education to teach fellow Mangyans.

Paying back



Filipinos glued to TV sets for 20 minutes

LUZON

MINDANAO

THE VISAYAS

METRO MANILA

GMA: Verdict to end destabilization talk

'Continuing learning story'

Don't single out Erap

Villar saddened

Rule of law

Lacson respects decision

Where convicted felons go

No strong argument

IN THE KNOW

Estrada's coaccused are still at large

Warrants of arrest issued



Court bases ruling on 2 illegal acts

Boracay Mansion

Without parent motive

Prosecution failed in Velarde account

Legal complexities

Excerpts from the Sandiganbayan decision in Case No. 26558

Paper trail

Mind-boggling amounts

Erap foundation

Gaps in prosecution case

Singson testimony farfetched

Reasonable doubt

News

'Catch' on cyber education deal

Opposition solon cites poor facilities in target schools



OUTGOING ENVOY

Senate told: Answer ex-justices' bid

Aplus METRO

Erap diehards protest guilty verdict

Reduced in number but still fiercely loyal to idol, supporters show objection

THE EMOTIONS WERE JUST AS INTENSE AS they were in 2001 when former President Joseph Estrada was arrested.



MetroBriefs

Man loses van to thief

Ayala Center hotline

QHS Class '82 reunion

Erap conviction forebodes ill for GMA



On Target
Ramon Tulfo

Did you know



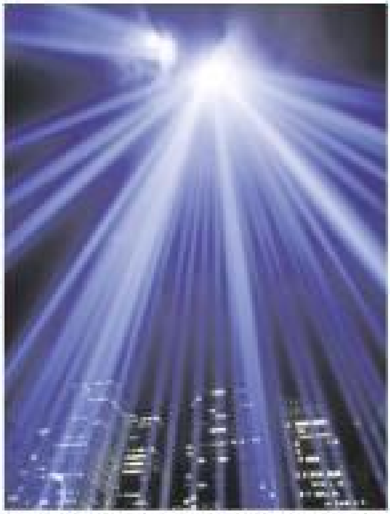
The WORLD



Shinzo Abe, Japan's defeated ideologue

Japan's Abe quits as prime minister





US remembers Sept. 11 terror attacks in silence



NEW DAWN FOR ETHIOPIA

Time magazine to fight Suharto libel ruling

Bush to announce troop cuts in Iraq

Massive bomb attack foiled in Turkey

AP

WorldBriefs

New bomb threats in Mexico

Reuters

Zimbabwe archbishop resigns

Reuters

Megawati eyes presidency anew

China plans major air raid drill

Reuters

Syria protests Israeli air strike

Reuters


SONY
Sony recommends Windows Vista® Business
intel
Centrino
Duo
Core 2 Duo
inside
The New Essence of Elite
VAIO
Introducing the VAIO TZ from Sony.
Powered by Intel® Centrino® Duo Processor Technology and Windows Vista® Business, this advanced notebook is designed to provide assured performance in a luxurious, ultra-light, carbon fiber body. Packed with features for business and entertainment, it doesn't just boast cutting-edge form and function. It is the cutting edge.
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SPORTS





SAN BEDA'S Pong Escobal barrels inside the baseline as he drives past Mapua's Scott Co. The Lions avoided a playoff by decking the Cardinals in the semifinals yesterday.

Lions, Knights seal title clash

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN BEDA AND LETRAN BOTH TOOK THE EXPRESSWAY TO get to the finals last night.

Showing composure and skill down the stretch, the league's top-ranked teams left their respective foes by the wayside to arrange a title showdown that last happened in the NCAA men's basketball tournament 37 years ago.

Fernandos fire 68s, share RP Am elims lead

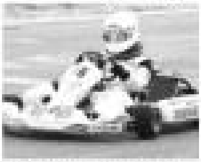


Chinese bets top picks in Asian chess

Scotch Doubles 10-ball event starts Sept. 19



Benito rules Cebu karting leg





Fessap national tournament up

Bancod is CJAP's pick for August



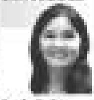
Chandler powers Koreans anew; Alaska signs Bono



BONO

A TV sitcom awaits Manny after Barrera

IN HUDDLE



VISAYAS POF

Capiz bets capture six golds





Northwoods, Eastridge gain 'Fed' semis

Top taekwondo bets hurdle foes

MLTC, Acropolis lead tennis tilt

1,500 jins join inter-school tilt

SPORTS



Warriors go for sweep

AS RARE AND SPECIAL AS A 14-0 SWEEP MAY BE, THE University of the East Warriors refuse to sound off any thoughts on reaching the brink of a historical moment.



Greece rips Portugal, nails slot in quarters

Olympians shoot down Hawks, bag crown

By Marc Anthony Reyes



CHEER FACTOR:

Argentina nears Rugby World Cup last 8

Lions, Knights seal championship clash

BUSINESS

Peso, stocks rally after Erap conviction

But traders divided on issue of pardon

LOCAL FINANCIAL MARKETS YESTERDAY REBOUNDED AS INvestors heaved a sigh of relief over the nation's peaceful acceptance of the Sandiganbayan's conviction of ousted President Joseph Estrada after a six-year trial on plunder charges.

World oil prices near all-time highs

Gov't offers 7 infra projects to private sector

CURRENCIES



IN THIS ISSUE

ERC loses jurisdiction over ecozones

Peza gains control of power suppliers in economic zones

BOC exceeds August collection target

DA adds planting seasons to raise rice productivity

With changing of guard, IC reverses CTPL thrust

Gov't hikes budget for socialized housing to ₱7.62B in '08

Bulk to subsidize resettlement projects in Metro Manila

SM, Microtel sign deal on 150-room hotel in Mall of Asi

[illegible]

TKC Steel raising P2.7B from offering

[illegible]

World oil prices near all-time highs

[illegible]

Sorry, not end of the world yet

BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

Peso, stocks rally after Erap conviction

Gov't ...

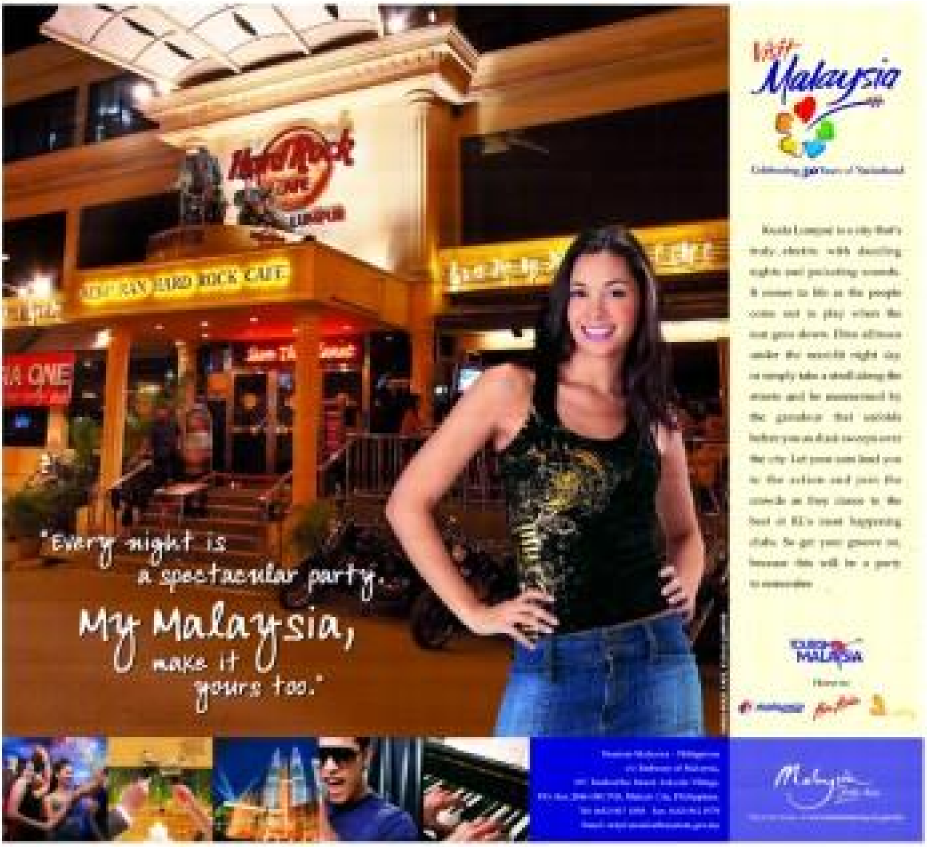
Business

Metrobank investment unit less upbeat on stock market

BSP bracing for volatility

RP can handle fluctuations, Tetangco says

SARAWAK REGATTA



Bringing Eaga to the world

MindanaWorld



Joji Ilagan-Bian

THE RECENT ESTABLISHMENT of the BIMP-Eaga consortium of tour operators and travel agents is most certainly a welcome development.

The consortium is the strategic arm of the BIMP-Eaga Tourism Council (BETC) that seeks to maximize the potentials of the East Asian growth area as an alternative to mainstream tourist destinations in Asia.

The growth area covers parts of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Recruiting members

Since the consortium will be formally launched in November this year during the 3rd BIMP-Eaga Travex in Kudat, Sabah, Malaysia, BETC chairs have now started tapping active travel tour operators and travel agents to become members.

With the consortium aiming to develop and market innovative and competitive tour packages across Eaga, we see this region becoming the next big thing in travel.

The challenge would be to effectively promote BIMP-Eaga as a single tourist destination in the same way Europe is being positioned.

The burden of providing the favorable conditions to make this happen will be partly borne by the members of the consortium as they will be developing the travel packages for Eaga.

First, flights should be made available, as this will affect the cost of the tour package. While travel agents can still develop tour packages without ready flights, the competitiveness will be in question, given the cost of connecting flights.

Second, should flights be available, acceptable arrangements should be undertaken by airline companies with tour operators and travel agents, particularly on promo rates.

And third, there should be enough committed travel agents who would aggressively sell these tour packages in the market.

Once these conditions are met, the consortium will be able to develop competitive travel packages for BIMP-Eaga.

Putting the region in the spotlight and making the people aware of what it has to offer as a destination would have to be considered.

While such grand plans is noted, we must also address that need to establish stronger public-private sector partnerships in marketing and promotions between government tourism offices and BETC as well as complete high quality tourism materials on BIMP-Eaga.

Region's strength

Focusing on culture, adventure and nature (CAN) would certainly play to the region's strength for there is a wealth of these three in this part of the world.

For the Philippine side, which covers Mindanao and Palawan, destinations and activities that have been initially identified include the Underground River in Puerto Princesa, Palawan; Fort Pilar Shrine and Museum, Yakan and Badjao villages, Caracol de Zamboanga, regatta, game fishing and trekking at Pasonanca National Park and Boxed Seal in Region 9 and the Gardens of Malasag eco-tourism village, water rafting in Bukidnon, whitewater river rafting/tubing, diving, canopy walk, hot/cold springs, Iligan's Dodiongan Aguinaldo Falls (Bitogo) in Region 10.

Activities and destinations in Region 11 include the Kaliara Cultural Village in Sta. Cruz, Mt. Apo Mountain Climbing, spelunking at Kapalong, Davao Norte, whitewater rafting in Maco, Davao City, the Philippine Eagle Sanctuary, Eden Nature Park, Crocodile Park, Malagos Garden Resort and Puentespina Flower Gardens.

For Region 12 and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), tourist destinations include Lake Sebu, Bilo-os Cultural Village, Sarangani River tubing, Mt. Apo, Bukanan Hot Spring, Turtle Islands, dunes and other attractions.

Prime destinations

For the Caraga Region, the Enchanted River and Museum, Island of Siargao, Hinatuan Island, Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary and Sohoton Cove have been identified as possible destinations that will attract travelers.

Infrastructure and transport support will also be an important factor in getting travelers to Eaga. When properly linked transport routes are put in place, a thriving tourism industry will inevitably follow.

(*Joji Ilagan-Bian is an advocate for the development of the island. She is chair of Joji Ilagan Foundation, Phil. Call Center Alliance, Mindanao Tech-Voc Schools Association, Mindanao Rep., Export Development Council. E-mail comments: jojibian@jiyan-bian.com.*)

No need to amend Epira, Amcham says

RP urged to lower power rates instead

By Abigail L. Ho

INSTEAD OF AMENDING RA 9136, OR the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines says the government should just focus on making the existing law work.

"There is no need to tinker with the Epira. We should give it time to work," Amcham executive director Robert Sears said on the sidelines of yesterday's Philippine Economic Briefing.

He said the government should work on finding ways to reduce power rates in the country, as this was still a major concern among foreign businesses operating here.

"We want to see the Philippines have competitive power rates," he said, adding that the government had "to move aggressively to sell the power assets" of the National Power Corp. as this would pave the way for the implementation of retail competition and open access.

The Epira mandates the fulfillment of five conditions before open access could be implemented.

Two of these remain unfulfilled: the privatization of 70 percent of Napocor's Luzon and Visayas capacities and the transfer of 70 percent of Napocor's independent power producer contracts to IPP administrators.

However, House Bill No. 1669, penned by House energy committee chair and Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo and Camarines Sur Rep. Luis Villafuerte, sought to reduce the current 70-percent Napocor privatization threshold to only 50 percent so that retail competition and open access could be implemented soon.

It likewise proposed to bring down from the current 70 percent to 50 percent the percentage of capacities covered by IPP contracts to be placed under the control and management of IPP administrators.

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has targeted the privatization of 70 percent of Napocor's Luzon and Visayas capacities by the end of 2008, enough to meet the retail competition and open access requirement.

With the sale of the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant in July, PSALM had already sold 24.4 percent of the state firm's 4,535.7-megawatt capacity in the two grids.

PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said in an earlier interview that PSALM should be able to hit the 70 percent privatization level by year's end.

The 70-percent level should be reached by next year and the entire privatization process completed by 2009.

PSALM will be auctioning off the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power plant next month, the 175-MW Ambuklao-Binga hydropower plant package in November, and the 192.5-MW Palinpinon geothermal facility and 146.5-MW Binga diesel-fired power plant package in December.

Fair trade group seeks Jpepa renegotiation

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE SENATE SHOULD HOLD back action on the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement and instead go for renegotiation, this time involving affected sectors in the talks, said Quezon Rep. Lorenzo R. Tañada III.

Speaking as a partner-ally of the Fair Trade Alliance, which is against the Jpepa in its present form, Tañada said in a briefing there was no hurry to ratify the treaty.

"Let us look hard before we leap," he said. "Let us not play into the Department of Trade and Industry's fear factor, pushing us into implementing the Jpepa lest we lose out to our neighbors."

The lawmaker was reacting to statements made by trade officials, who had said ratifying or rejecting the Jpepa meant passing opportunities or passing up on them, especially at a time when Tokyo was opening its service sector to foreigners for the first time in history.

Last August, Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino—who was the country's chief negotiator during the Jpepa talks—said Japan has wrapped up similar agreements with Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand and was in negotiations with other SEA countries.

Aquino said that without the Jpepa, the Philippines would be left behind because Philippine exports to Japan would not enjoy preferential tariffs unlike those from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia and even Vietnam. Filipino professionals would not have access to jobs in Japan unlike those from the same countries, the Philippines would not send a "strong positive signal" to major trading partners that it is committed to grow under a more open trading environment, unlike the same countries.

Yesterday, Tañada urged the Senate to "take cognizance of the concerns of various sectors when it considers the Jpepa.

"Let us not simply take a leap of faith and bow others to the punch just because talks in the World Trade Organization has hit a snag," he said.

"Let us not commit into this just because existing two bilateral trade agreements would be the mood of most countries," he added.

Splash to hike capital

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro

BEAUTY PRODUCT MANUFACTURER Splash Corp. is seeking regulatory approval to hike its capital to P1 billion from P400 million.

In documents with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Splash said that with the increased capital, Splash will have 1 billion shares at P1 each, from the current 400 million shares at P1 apiece.

The capital hike plan was approved by the majority of the company's board of directors.

Out of the increase, Splash Holdings Inc., which owns 99.99 percent of Splash Corp., will subscribe to P450 million worth of the increase in capital or 450 million shares.

Splash Holdings is an investment holding company that is wholly owned by Splash Group founders Dr. Rolando and his wife Dr. Rosalinda Rog-Hernandez.

Splash Holdings owns six companies with total gross sales in 2006 amounted to about P4.5 billion.

Splash Corp. plans to list part of its shares on the stock market this year to raise P1.9 billion to P2.5 billion.

Splash will sell a total of 203.05 million shares through an initial public offering at P8.70 to P11.18 each.

The offer shares will consist of 168.04 million new shares and 35 million shares now held by Splash Holdings Inc., the company said in a prospectus filed with regulators.

Net proceeds from the primary offer are estimated at P1.37 to P2 billion.

In its prospectus, Splash said the funds will be spent for research and development (P391.3 to P803.2 million), brand management and new product introductions (P331.9 to P382.13 million) and acquisitions (P558.6 million to P1.2 billion).

LIFESTYLE
Editor: Chelo Banal-Formoso

The Beck & Koa project

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

THE MINUTE I ENTERED MICKEY'S DELI, the restaurant of former Manila Hotel chef/butcher Michael Beck, I knew I was in for a treat. Few places are as visually appetizing!

Balancing the perfectly German look is Lamina, the new baby of the bread master himself, John Lee Koa. The high-end bread shop serves rustic European-style bread that ranges from sour dough, delectable ciabatta, crusty baguettes, authentic pretzels to super delicious blueberry muffins.

My favorite on the menu? Nürnberger Pork Sausages with Sauerkraut and Warm Bavarian Potato Salad—fantastic in taste and price!

The recipe was passed on to Beck by his great, great grandfather, who built two restaurants in Germany and a third, fortunately for us, in Makati.

All of Michael's sausages are made in the very heart of his restaurant. He even slaughters the hogs personally, making sure that they are at the pH levels he desires. He does the same with cattle.

Although he has not officially opened yet, he already makes 40 different sausages, imports 48 other variants of the same, including hams as well as 45 kinds of cheeses, some of which had been sent Beck's before Mickey's came along.

The concepts of Beck and Koa fit like hand in glove. Together, they serve some of the most splendid sandwiches in town—the kind where both bread and filling are done perfectly, making for the ultimate deli fix.

> Both bread and filling are done perfectly

Longest sandwich

Something that tickles my fancy is the M.S.S. Mickey's Super Sandwich, the longest sandwich in town. It is stuffed with German mild cuts, Italian salamis, hams and different cheeses served in a whole Lamina ciabatta bread.

Then there is the corned beef hash, wrapped in sausage casings. First, it has to be sliced and, with the casings removed, formed into patties and fried to golden brown, together with mustard!

And what would a German gentleman be without his beer and knuckles? Well, Beck made sure that pork knuckles done fried or pickled could be had with a wide array of German beers.

What else could be said?

"Hey Mickey, you're so fine, you're so fine you blow my mind… Hey Mickey…" as the pop tune from the '80s goes.

My sentiments exactly when I stumbled upon Mickey's Deli that glorious Monday afternoon!

Mickey's is at 4 Jupiter Street, Makati (tels. 8990833/8952461).

My children love to eat choco cupcakes and choco lollipop with different designs. Can I ask for a recipe? Thank you for the pulvoron recipe. It's super delicious. My daughter told me it was the best pulvoron.

ANNALIZA ABABA

I hope the kids love this, too!

Cupcakes

2 c packed brown sugar
1 c white sugar
¾ c vegetable oil
3 eggs
2 2/3 c flour
1 tbsp baking powder
2 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
1 tbsp vanilla extract
1 ½ c dark cocoa powder
1 ½ c milk (I find that evaporated milk or sour cream makes this cake more moist)
1 ½ c warm water

Beat sugars and oil in a mixer for 10 minutes.

Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine dry ingredients—flour, baking powder and soda, salt.

Dissolve cocoa powder in warm water. Combine vanilla, milk.

Alternately add the dry and the liquid ingredients.

Pour into lined cupcake pans.

Bake in preheated, 350F, oven for 15 minutes, depending on size of cupcake molds.

Cool. Spread icing before serving.

Icing:
1 ½ c cream
2/3 c butter
¾ c unsweetened cocoa powder
3 tbsp light corn syrup
300 g bittersweet chocolate, chopped into pieces
1 tsp pure vanilla extract

In a saucepan, combine the cream, butter, cocoa and corn syrup and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat.

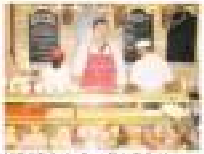
Add chocolate to a large bowl. Whisk until chocolate is melted, smooth and of spreading consistency.

Refrigerate until ready to use.

E-mail the author at reggieaspiras@inquirer.com.ph



NÜRNBERGER Pork Sausages



MICHAEL Beck



LAMINA serves freshly baked bread



BETTER THAN THE BEST.


GERONIMO'S Seafood Pasta Marinara


THE GREAT Ribeye


TEXAS ROADHOUSE's Shrimp and Salmon Skewer

Not business as usual

Text by Linda B. Bolido
Photos by Rudy Esperas

Though the places with familiar names are decidedly looking more spruced up, dining at Bonifacio High Street is more casual than dress-up

IF YOU ARE SETTING UP IN A PLACE called High Street, your usual just will not do.


THOUGH Texas Roadhouse is debuting on High Street, it is run by people with extensive experience in the food business.


THE BABY Back Ribs


JESSE James Sampler

Casual dining


FAJITA Beef Salad


A FANCY dessert from Texas Roadhouse Grill


SITTING outside Starbucks becomes a delight with the two fountains in front.

20th branch


SEATTLE'S Best Coffee tries to have something new every two or three months.


THE "KING" waits all ready to rock and roll for TGIFriday's customers.


STARBUCKS Coffee brings the products that have ... to High Street.


BROTHERS Burger is probably the only place in town serving lamb burgers.


HEALTHY Options takes on an ... look at High Street.



TUNA jaw or panga grilled to perfection

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

A 'tuna' of a time in GenSan

> We learned something about the big fish that contributed so much to the economic life of the city formerly known as Dadiangas





DELIGHTFUL FISH FILLET





Freshly baked mooncakes

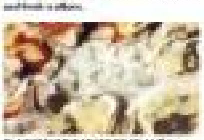
DINING OUT

KIMPURA

SUPER BOWL



CALIFORNIA Pizza Kitchen



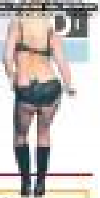
BLACKBEARD'S SEAFOOD ISLAND



PALOMA

ENTERTAINMENT
Editor: Emmie G. Velarde

INSIDE





"LUST, Caution" winning crew (from left) at the just-concluded 64th Venice Film Festival: US actor Wang Leehom, Taiwanese director Ang Lee, Chinese actress Tang Wei, Hong Kong actor Tony Leung and Chinese actress Joan Chen.

Ang Lee bows to China

Self-censors award-winning movie

BEIJING—TAIWANESE director Ang Lee axed 30 minutes from his award-winning erotic spy thriller "Lust, Caution" to pass China's censorship rules and make it child friendly, state media reported Tuesday.

Lee, who on Saturday picked up his second Venice Film Festival Golden Lion for Best Picture for his new film, was told by Chinese authorities he had to cut out steamy scenes for mainland audiences, Xinhua news agency said.

"Authorities told me there was no film rating system on the mainland so they let me cut it," Xinhua quoted Lee as saying.

After the cuts, the film, originally two hours and 38 minutes long, became "relatively clean," Lee was quoted as saying. "[illegible]"

The movie, a tense drama set in Japanese-occupied Shanghai in the 1940s, had been given the NC-17 rating in the US, banning viewers under 17.

Still 'reasonable'

Lee said he "took pains" to preserve the integrity of the film. "For a viewer who has not watched the full version, the short version remains reasonable."

Some violent scenes had also been cut, Xinhua said.

The film opens in China on [illegible], a month later than its schedule opening date around the world. AFP

CHEER FACTOR

Just like a H'wood star

FORMER US PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER JOINED the ranks of movie stars at the world premiere of "Man from Plains," his biopic directed by Jonathan Demme ("Silence of the Lambs," "Philadelphia") at the Toronto film festival. While thousands of Clooney and Pitt fans stalked Toronto's red carpet [illegible], a smaller, but duly awestruck, group gathered in front of a local cinema hoping to get the Nobel peace prize winner's autograph. AFP



"IT'S a private matter"

KC mum on Lino Cayetano

By Marinel R. Cruz

KC CONCEPCION considers her relationship with television director Lino Cayetano "a very private matter," and remains tight-lipped about it.

However, speaking at the launch of her ABS-CBN TV program, "KC [illegible] to 'Fame'" [illegible], KC told the entertainment press that Lino makes her "[illegible]."

She denied rumors linking her to Billy Crawford, Sam Milby and Gian Magdangal.

Billy courted her and spent time with her in Paris but, KC said, they never became an item.

[illegible]—who she worked with in the past—were "like my older brother."

As for former [illegible], KC said they were "close." She did not elaborate.

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIE SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

1 THE BRAVE ONE - THX	6 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 DISTURBIA
3 indieSine: LIGAW LIHAM	8 DAY WATCH NANCY DREW
4 UNDERDOG	9 EVAN ALMIGHTY SKIN WALKERS
5 FOSTER CHILD	10 1408

Ligaw Liham

[illegible]

showing on SEPTEMBER 12 to 25
Robinsons Movieworld Galleria



ERMITA

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	
2 FOSTER CHILD	5 UNDERDOG
3 DISTURBIA	6 THE BRAVE ONE
4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	7 SKINWALKERS 1408



DRESS 'EM UP UNDERDOG STYLE

Bring your cute pet dogs in a superhero costume and get special prizes.

*Registration forms are now available at all [illegible]

[illegible] FUN SHOW [illegible] Robinsons Place, Manila [illegible] Showing on SEPT. 12 [illegible]

METRO EAST

1 UNDERDOG	5 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	6 1408
3 THE BRAVE ONE	7 DISTURBIA
4 DAYWATCH	8 RUSH HOUR 3 SKIN WALKERS

NOVALICHES

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE
2 UNDERDOG	4 DAYWATCH

PIONEER

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE
2 UNDERDOG	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME

STA. ROSA

1 SIGNOS
2 UNDERDOG
3 SINKING OF JAPAN
4 THE BRAVE ONE

LIPA

1 UNDERDOG
2 THE INVASION
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 RUSH HOUR 3

DASMARIÑAS

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 SIGNOS
4 DAYWATCH

IMUS

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 THE BRAVE ONE
4 DAYWATCH

ANGELES

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN
2 UNDERDOG
3 HAIRSPRAY
4 DON'T LOOK BACK

TARLAC

1 SINKING of JAPAN
2 A LOVE STORY
3 SIGNOS

STARMILLS

1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	4 HAIRSPRAY
2 UNDERDOG	5 DON'T LOOK BACK
3 SIGNOS	6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE INVASION
4 SINKING of JAPAN
5 PLANET TERROR
6 SIGNOS

ILOILO

1 UNDERDOG
2 1408
3 THE LAST LEGION
4 THE INVASION
5 THE LAST KING of SCOTLAND
6 SIGNOS

FEEDBACK

From Andy [illegible]

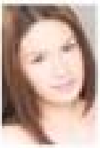
This is about "Tirar Ang..." [illegible] ... directors and two groups who made this movie. There were management problems and the first group was not properly credited. Sigrid Bernardo directed [illegible] percent of the trailer, as well as [illegible] percent of the finished product. But she was mentioned only at the bottom of the credits. I hope this helps Sigrid and her group, who are being [illegible] by the producers.

And now, a peek into . . .

Hate mall

Open all hours

Do the walk



PAULEEN LUNA

Teysi: Comedy can't die

From page D6

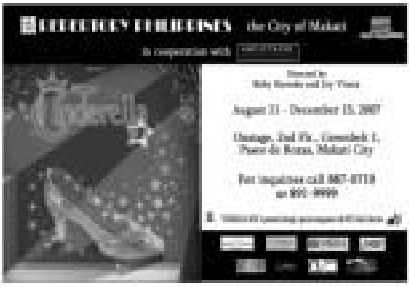
old amusement."

Teysi adds: "Good thing, my packaging is different."

She has not completely lost faith in the biz, though. "I'm very excited about independent digital films."

She got three Best Supporting Actress nominations for her role in [illegible] "[illegible] and Juliet"—[illegible] One film fest, Golden Screen Awards and [illegible].

"It's my first [illegible]," she says. "It made all the hard work worthwhile."



Teen mom to cool ma

From page D6

self a "cool mom," Jean said she is not strict, especially on matters concerning love. "I know Jessica will eventually fall in love. [But] for now, I want her to enjoy life," she said. "Jessica asks me about everything. I always advise her to just be herself."

She added: "People come up to me and say Jessica is a good actress. I'm so proud of her."

Jean said she was equally proud of her career at the moment. She had done "almost every thing," she said, since her 1980s launching horror flick, "[illegible]," which is still being shown on TV.

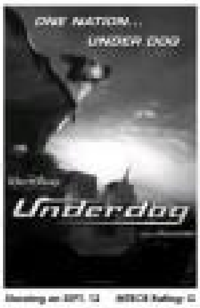
She played the role of Madame Claudia in the upcoming TV series "Pangako Sa 'Yo," and the lead role in "Magpakailanman: The [illegible] Story."

About the latter role, Jean recounted: "I competed with Vilma Santos for the One Hour Award Best Actress trophy for that role. It won, but we beat the rival channel in the ratings game."

Also challenging for Jean was her role of comedy song artist Mystica in "[illegible]."

"Like Mystica, I had to sing, dance and wear fake nails," Jean said. "That was really tough too."

But the ultimate challenge for her, Jean said, would be to pose for a men's magazine. "I can bare skin if a movie requires it, but I'm not so sure about doing that for a men's magazine. Although, I'd probably consider it if my daughter does not object."









At the Cinemas

Cinema				
GLORIETTA 1	1 FOSTER CHILD	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN	3 THE BRAVE ONE	4 [illegible]
GLORIETTA 4	1 UNDERDOG	2 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	3 THE BRAVE ONE	
	4 [illegible]	5 DISTURBIA	6 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 [illegible]
GREENBELT 1	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 THE BRAVE ONE		
GREENBELT 3	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 THE BRAVE ONE		
	3 DISTURBIA	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	5 UNDERDOG	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE BRAVE ONE	2 ROGUE ASSASSIN		
	3 UNDERDOG	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	5 DISTURBIA	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DISTURBIA	2 UNDERDOG	3 [illegible]	4 [illegible]
MARKET! MARKET!	1 ROGUE ASSASSIN	2 FOSTER CHILD		
	3 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME	4 THE BRAVE ONE	5 UNDERDOG	
TRINOMA	1 FOSTER CHILD	2 DISTURBIA	3 UNDERDOG	4 I KNOW WHO KILLED ME
	5 [illegible]	6 ROGUE ASSASSIN	7 THE BRAVE ONE	

At the Malls

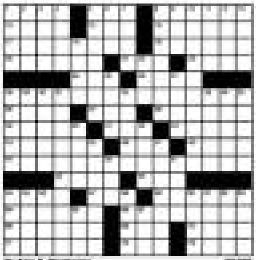
Mall	Event
Glorietta	[illegible] September [illegible], 2007 at the Glorietta Activity Center
Greenbelt	[illegible] September [illegible], 2007
Alabang Town Center	[illegible] September [illegible], 2007 at the Activity Center
Ayala Center Cebu	Elliott Yamin of American Idol Live! September [illegible]
Market! Market!	[illegible] September [illegible], 2007 at the Activity Center
Cinderella	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids [illegible] Opens August 11, 2007
Ayala Museum	[illegible]
TriNoma	Samsung Exhibit [illegible]

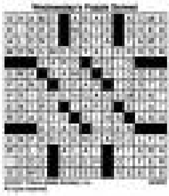






DAILY CROSSWORD





CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

			1	8				
	9		6					7
						8		4
			8				6	
2		7		5		1		3
	5				6			
6		4						
5					4		9	
				7	5			

Difficulty Level ★★★

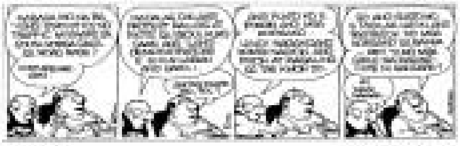
A. LIPIN



Answer to previous puzzle

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

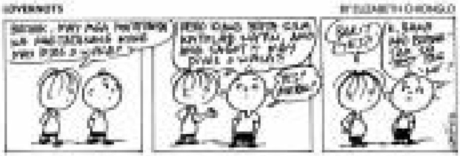
PUGAD BABOY



GARFIELD

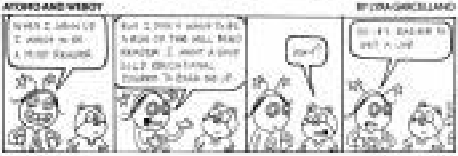


LOVERNOTS



HOROSCOPE

ATSOY AND WEBOY



KIKO MACHINE



DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Anne Carvajal

And now, a peek into Pauleen Luna's blog

Reality Check (by Pauleen Luna)

A Filipino Thing (by Jed Madela)

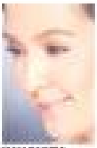
Lessons in love



A 'mangled' comeback

Teysi: Comedy can't die





JEAN GARCIA

Teenage mom to cool ma

TV tandem